

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Romans: God's Power for Salvation

TITLE: Set Free from Sin

SCRIPTURE: Romans 6:11-23

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The book of Romans is a masterfully written exposition of the gospel of God. Without a doubt, it is the foundation of authentic Christianity and the most articulate, systematic understanding of our faith found in the Bible. Countless lives have been changed by the truth found in this ancient letter, and it continues to change lives today. Interestingly enough, Romans was written to Christians. So, while the good news found in Romans can certainly bring people to faith in Jesus, the actual focus is on how the gospel helps Christians think rightly about God, life, faith, and Christian community. If you want to grow to know God more personal and intimate way, this letter is for you!

The Bible says that when you became a Christian something radical happened to you. First of all, you were taken out of Adam and placed into Christ (Rom 5:12-21). Second, you became a brand-new person with a brand-new kind of life. Third, you now have the same relationship to sin that Christ has to sin. That means, finally, you were set free from the power of sin. But the idea that we are "set free from the power of sin" is hard to accept when we still struggle so much with sin, isn't it? The question is, "If I'm so free then why, functionally and practically, does it still feel like I'm a slave to sin?" And that's the question Paul addresses in Romans 6 and 7.

We find implied here in Romans 6:12 and running all through chapter 7, Paul's understanding of "Basic Christian Anatomy." He says we are two-part people—physical body and inner, spiritual self. Sin resides in your mortal body. And, it is sin in our mortal bodies that pulls us toward sin in the world.

The more you learn to think of sin as a separate entity from yourself then the more you will identify with the New You God has made you to be. (cf. Romans 7:13-24). Sin is not you, and you are not sin. You are not your body. Your body houses you.

Our problem is that we so closely identify ourselves with Sin that we miss what God has given us and done for us in Christ. The truth is, the power switch of sin has been turned off, and you don't have to turn it back on. To turn "sin" on is to invite death into your emotional, relational, and spiritual life.

The more you identify yourself with sin, the more you will give in to sin. The more you learn to identify yourself with the New You God has made you to be, the more victory over sin you will see.

Two "Take-Aways"

- Obsess over the truth in the passage, speak the truth out loud.
- Pick a part of your body that keeps tripping you up and present it to God's control every day.

Remember, you are not the person you used to be, so you don't have to live the way you used to live.

For Discussion —

When you listen to Bible teaching, you should be listening with an ear to learn, but also an ear to share with others what you are learning. Keep that in mind as you discuss today's message. How do you need to internalize this message so you could share this Good News with people who need to hear it?

1. Have someone read Romans 6:11-23
2. What does it mean that you now have the same relationship to sin that Christ has to sin? That you are dead to sin but alive to God? (6:10-11)
3. Why is it so hard to accept the fact that we are set free from the power of sin? (6:12)
4. Talk about Paul's understanding of "Basic Christian Anatomy." Look closely at Romans 6:12 and 7:13-24. Have someone read the text and stop along the way to point out how Paul sees himself as a two-part person.
5. Why is it so important to learn to think of sin as a separate entity from your new, true self?
6. What does it mean to not present the parts of your body to sin, but to present your bodies to God as instruments of righteousness? What does that look like in everyday life? (6:13, 19)
7. When Paul asks, "What possible benefit is there to put yourself back under slavery to sin" (6:21-23) he's using logic and reason to answer the question, "Can we continue to sin since we are no longer under the law but under grace" (6:15). How might you use this same reasoning if you were talking to a believing friend who uses grace as an excuse to live in a way that God clearly says is sinful?
8. Why is the familiar verse Romans 6:23 more about life now than life in heaven after we die? Give examples of the statement—"Wherever there is sin, there is death."

BASIC CHRISTIAN ANATOMY

I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (7:22,23)

